



COSTAGUANA

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Aloja (pronounced as in Spanish). Thees ees COSTAGUANA, a journal of postal Diplomacy and encrusted enervation produced under the auspices of Conrad von Metzke, 13220 Sundance Avenue, San Diego, CA 92129. Telephone: Home (619) 484-3649. Work (619) 487-6384. It is probably best if you use the work 'phone; if that is a problem, be advised that the home 'phone has a machine connected to it that may ask you to leave a message, so be prepared to read your moves QUICKLY.

Game fees: There is one regular game open at a fee of \$7.00. If you are currently a recipient of this newsletter for any reason, the fee is reduced to \$3.00. In either case the fee includes a postpaid subscription to COSTAGUANA for the duration of the game, subject only to your not dropping out unannounced. (There is no shame in resigning if you feel you can't continue; but for Christ's sake, what's so difficult about spending 20 cents to tell someone???)

Subscriptions, apart from games: No thank you. Trades: I'll call you.

NEW GAME: Now forming. See above for fees. When I revived this rubbish a few months ago, it was my stated intent to take on a maximum of two games, preferably orphans. Well, no second orphan has appeared, so I'm filling the pages with an original game. Once both games are under way, that's it; there won't be another announced until one of the current ones gets close to end. (I've made it clear to the orphan service that in an emergency they can always call on me, and in any case orphans will always get preference over original games in these pages.) So sign up now; it's undoubtedly your last chance at least until next issue.

THE ORIGIN OF OUR NAME: This newsletter has gone in and out of existence several times in its history, but its origins are - for this hobby - old. It started in 1965 and is thus the second oldest Diplomacy journal (allowing for non-continuous publication) in existence. It is preceded only by John Boardman's GRAUSTARK, which started it all in 1963. (Note: Occasionally stories will crop up that I actually beat Dr. Boardman to the punch in 1962 with a journal called MONGO. This is hogwash. It was originally contrived as a joke to tease John, but I've come to realize that John very much wants his credit as the "inventor" of postal play, and he surely deserves it. I did try to start a postal game in 1962, but it did not involve a journal of any sort - it was by carbon-copy letter - and in any case the scheme fell apart before 1963 was finished for lack of interest. It is also appropriate to mention that, in 1967, Jeff Key and Eric Just of Oklahoma "invented" postal play themselves, entirely independently. So there were actually three unrelated "inventions" of our hobby, but Dr. Boardman's is the first that actually took hold.

In the early days of the hobby - John Boardman invented this too - it was traditional to name Diplomacy magazines after fictitious countries - thus, GRAUSTARK itself, MARSOVIA, BROBDINGNAG, EREHWON, and COSTAGUANA. My title was gleaned from the novel "Nostromo" by the Polish-born British author Joseph Conrad, for whom I am named - he was my father's favorite author - and whose works (Lord Jim, Secret Sharer, The Lagoon) everyone reads in high school. In the novel, Costaguana is an invented "banana republic" in Central America, the perfect stereotype of such nations in ca. 1915 - corrupt, violent, steamy, mysterious, controlled by foreigners of the United Fruit Co. stripe.

IX/3/2

HAD YOU NOTICED? Either my typing has improved, or I've bought some white-out.

MY OTHER HOBBY, to answer the question propounded last issue (and which Matt Fleming answered on the back of an envelope) is philately. Specifically, I collect and study the stamps and postal history of Austria and related areas. (What is a "related area?" Well...Bosnia and Herzegovina. Hungary up to 1918. Liechtenstein until 1918. United Nations offices in Vienna. Austrian post offices in Crete, the Ottoman Empire, and China. Austrian occupation of Serbia, Romania, Montenegro and Italy. Romanian occupation of Austria and Hungary. Serbian and French occupation of Hungary. Italian occupation of Austria. Germany, 1938-1945, used in the Ostmark (Austria during Anschluss). Austrian peace-keeping forces' post offices in Lebanon. The Habsburg provinces of Lombardy-Venetia. Private issues of the Danube Steamship Company. The United States stamp issued during World War II picturing the flag of Austria, cancelled in one of the nine U.S. towns named Vienna.)

I used to grace each issue's masthead with silly drawings and stick-figures. I've kept the Kilroy figure (at COSTAGUANA, we call it "Grendel") but have dropped the rest in favor of an Austrian stamp of particular interest to me. Call it odd. Call it strange. Call it whatever you like; it is my goddamn newsletter and I'll print what I please.

In addition to Austrian stamps, I have a deep and abiding interest in classical music. I am a trained singer, and have actually given local concerts (with a specialty on the songs of Schubert) to good reviews. It is perhaps not too curious that my most-loved composers are all Austrian - Schubert, Haydn (both Michael and Joseph), Bruckner, Mahler, Mozart, and Schmidt. It was, in fact, the love of the music that led me to the collection of the stamps. (Playing in the background as I type this is Bruckner's Third - actually his Fifth, but there are two we don't count. My prized philatelic possession is an envelope I created myself: It is a big envelope on which a photo of the Grassi bust of Joseph Haydn is printed, and to which is affixed: The 1922 Famous Musicians issue picturing Haydn; the 1959 commemorative for Haydn's 150th death anniversary; the 1982 commemorative for Haydn's 250th birth anniversary; and the 1957 issues picturing landmarks in the towns of Hainburg and Eisenstadt, major locations in Haydn's career. The postal cancellation is from the town of Haydn's birth, Rohrau.)

ALLOW ME to quote in full a letter just received from a player in the new game:

"Dear Sir, I've heard about a wonderful game called Diplomacy which Teaches Young Men to be Gracious and Noble and Gain Confidence and Self-Esteem.

"Accordingly, I'm enclosing \$7, a paltry sum indeed to have bestowed upon me such generous rewards. It is unfortunate that I am a very, very slow learner, so please ask the kind gentlemen that will be in the game with me to explain things as much as they can. I will try very hard to learn because I truly do wish to be Gracious and Noble and Gain Confidence and Self-Esteem.

"Thank you so much, Stephen V. Cartier."

Okay, Mr. Cartier, I suspect we can accomodate you. However, there is some question in my mind that if the other six players actually turn out to be "kind gentlemen," we may have a ration of boredom on our hands....

THE NEXT PAGE is a silly. I doubt if anyone will take me up on this, but...would you care to guess what it is? I'll tell you that the handwriting is mine, there is nothing on the paper other than what you see, and I brought it home out of some files at work.

Ideas?

15969 (19-24) 21-22-23-
15961 15977 16-18
15951 25-26-27-28
15945 31-32
15937 35-36
15929 37-38-39
15921 46-47-48-49
15913 40 41-42-43-44
15992 15978 4-5-6
15964 1-2-3
15936 57-58-59-60
15922 63-62-61
15908 65-64
15894 67-68
15880 69-70
15866 72-71-73
76-74-75-76
78-77

TAMEGA

X 15824
~~15855~~

24

X 15795

1983AC - Spring 1903

I guess the way I chose to publish the builds - leaving blanks in case I heard from somebody at the last second, and putting in total unit numbers that turned out to be wrong - was horrendously confusing. Never again! Both standbys interpreted me to say that they got to build new units after all; this is not true, and fortunately I contacted both people and resolved the issue.

Dan Palter has resigned, so Jim Stevens takes over Italy. And Stu Lancaster has vanished into the Kansas dust, so Matt Johnston takes over France and Stu is banned from my games for life.

AUSTRIA (Robson): a boh-gal. a tri-ven. a ser-bul. a rum (s) ser-bul. f alb (s)
ITA ion-gre.

ENGLAND (Pustilnik): a stp-fin. f bar-nwy. f lvp (s) edi-cly. f edi-cly. f nth-
eng.

FRANCE (Johnston): a pic (s) gas-bur. a gas-bur. a bel (s) hol. a hol (h).
f mid-eng. f nat-mid.

GERMANY (Fleming): a kie (s) mun-ruh. a mun-ruh. a ber-mun. f den-hel.

ITALY (Stevens): a tun (h). a ven-tyo. f ion-gre.

RUSSIA (Walker): a war-mos. a ukr (s) war-mos. f aeg-con.

TURKEY (Walters): a bul (s) gre. a con (s) bul. a sev-rum. f ank-bla. f smy-
aeg. f gre (s) smy-aeg.

Turkish fleet Greece is annihilated. There are no retreats.

Fall 1902 moves will be due on MONDAY, 28 MAY 1984. (See last page for note.)

Because we have two new players, and because Jake Walters has a new address, it seems useful to print an updated and complete player list here:

Matt Fleming, 4290 Chateau de Ville, St.Louis, MO 63129
Matt Johnston, 2286 Lancaster Cove, Germantown, TN 38138
Michael Pustilnik, 140 Cadman Plaza West, Brooklyn, NY 11201
Pete Robson, 9011 Cheval Lane, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
James H. Stevens, 6021 Sleepy Hollow Rd., #2, Rome, NY 13440
R.Jacob (Jake) Walters, P.O. Box 1064, Brookline, MA 02146
Rodney C. Walker, 1273 Crest Dr., Encinitas, CA 92024

Guess it didn't work, eh, Jim?

PRESS RELEASES:

MOSKVA (24 March 1903): The demise of Tsar Mikhail V, called Barnovich, has left a real void in the government of the Holy Russian Empire. Since the entire Imperial Family was obliterated in a freak accident on the Baltic Sea, the question of succession seems mired in endless dispute and counter-claims. Finally, the Duma has appointed the former Commander of the Baltic Fleet, Admiral Rozhdestvensky Walkoff (Rear Admiral to his younger friends) as Imperial Regent until such time as a claimant to the throne could be found whom all agreed to. Admiral Walkoff immediately arrested Grand Duke Vladimir of Pskov and Grand Duke Nikolai of Kiev on charges of treason and had them fed to his pet dogs. Well, wolves, actually. Since Grand Dukes Vladimir and Nikolai were the two principal claimants to the throne, as well as treasonous rats, one member of the Duma (Semyon Otrepov of Petrograd) was moved to remark, "I suppose the 'Walkoff Dynasty' doesn't sound too bad. And, looking at the military situation, I suppose 'King of Poland' doesn't sound too bad either."

MOSKVA (3 April 1903): A Commission of Inquiry appointed by Regent Walkoff has finally reported on the death of Tsar Mikhail V. After presenting the report to the Regent, Commission President Vladimir Ulyanov (Duma Deputy for Kazan) summarized its contents for the press. "His Imperial Majesty died of repeated stab wounds in the back, administered by a dagger of fine Damascene workmanship, a type one can find easily in the bazaars of Constantinople. There seems little doubt as to the source of the assassination plot. The assassin himself, a rather ratty, greasy little man, unfortunately did not break under torture, even though we called in the Spanish Inquisition. He did cry out, "Allahu Akbar" toward the end, as they were thrusting him repeatedly into the Comfy Chair. Obviously, we know whom to blame."

JAMUL (the editor's chair): More was submitted, but space runneth out. I print what I can fit. If sent soon enough, I arrange to fit. But for now, we must hold the excess.

THIS IS A LINEAR SEPARATOR, ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL GLORIES OF MY PUBLICATIONS IN GOLDEN DAYS OF YORE

Remember. Deadline 28 May. In the meanwhile, I hope you are not offended by the lack of envelope. If you are, and if you need a roommate, please write me for an interesting address in Leeper, Pennsylvania....

Adieu.

EMERGENCY NOTICE: Owing to copy machine failure, I am unable to print and mail this issue until Monday the 7th. Accordingly, I am altering the deadline to Monday the 28th of May. (We'll make up the time on the builds.)

13220 Sundance Avenue
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FIRST CLASS

(You know - the one
that Bolger says goes
faster?)

FIRST CLASS